WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Pilferage of mail bag at Indira Gandhi International Airport

*227. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the 'Indian Express' dated the 24th October, 1986 to the effect that mail-bag insured for $-15000 and booked by M|s. Thomas Cook for its Dubai Office, was pilfered allegdely in connivance with Air India staff at the Indira Gandhi International Airport;

(b) if so, what are the details in regard thereto; and

(c) what action has been taken in the matter and whether the responsibility in the matter has since been fixed; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A valuable mail-bag which was meant for despatch to Dubai via Bombay by an Air-India flight was found tampered with and pilfered on 18th October, 1986 at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi.

(c) Four Air-India employees who are suspected to have been involved in the pilferage were arrested by the police but later released on bail. All four employees have been placed under suspension by Air-India. Police investigations are continuing.

Kala-azar disease

*228. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:
SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of cases of Kala-azar in Bihar, Bengal, Assam and other States during each of the last three years and how many of them proved fatal;

(b) what are the findings of the expert committee on Kala-azar headed by Dr. Harcharan Singh; and

(c) what action has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) to (c) According to the information received from the State Health authorities, the number of cases and deaths reported during the last three years due to Kala-azar are as under:—

Name of State	1984		1985 (Prov.)		1986 (Prov.)	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
Bihar	12224	65	11017	28	8639	32
Delhi	1*	..	1*	..	3*	..
Tamil Nadu	2	..				..
Uttar Pradesh	3	..		..	..	..
West Bengal	4229	..	4247	5	1456	6

* Cases imported from Bihar.

No case or death due to Kala-azar has been reported from Assam and the remaining parts of the country.

The Expert Committee on Kala-azar have concluded that Kala-azar control can be achieved by concentrating our efforts on the following three aspects:

1. Interruption of transmission
2. Early diagnosis and treatment of Kala-azar cases and
3. Health Education.

Since eradication of a vector-borne disease is technically very difficult, the Committee has laid stress mainly on the control of Kala-azar disease. The Committee has also emphasised the need for training of medical and para-medical personnel for Kala-azar control and also for initiating research activities/programmes.

The report of the Committee has been considered by the Government. It has been decided that inview of the focal nature of the disease, a special programme for Kala-azar eradication should be taken up in the States of West Bengal and Bihar. The State Governments of Bihar and West Bengal have been requested to send their views on the suggestions and the strategy to be adopted. The Government of India will render whatever assistance that is required by the State Governments within the over-all availability of resources.

Fire fighting system at Indira Gandhi International Airport

*229. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in the Statesman dated 18th September, 1986 under the heading "A possible disaster in the making";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that according to a report submitted by senior officials of the Fire Engineering Division to the Chairman of the International Airoprts Authority of India, almost all fire-safety system worth a total of over rupees seventeen lakhs at the Indira Gandhi International Airport Terminal are in a pathetic state;

(c) whether investigations have been made in this regard and responsibility fixed for it; and

(d) if so, what are the details of the action taken in the matter against officials found responsible therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During routine inspections at the time of installation, certain deficiencies were noticed in the new Fire Fighting System installed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, which have since been rectified by the contractors. The system is now functioning satisfactorily.

(c) and (d) Do nat arise in view of (b) above.

National Highway Authority

*230. SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM:
SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a National Highway Authority to achieve tighter control over funds for the construction and maintenance of highways throughout the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) Proposal to set up a National Highway Authority is under consideration of the Government.